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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAMA 001213

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP AND DS/IP/NEA
LONDON FOR ETHAN GOLDRICH

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KJUS](#) [PTER](#) [BA](#) [KSEC](#)

SUBJECT: JUSTICE MINISTER DISCUSSES COUNTER-TERRORISM LAW

REF: MANAMA 1120

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Susan L. Ziadeh for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) SUMMARY. On August 2, Minister of Justice Jawad Al Arrayed stressed to Charge that there is strong political will at the highest levels of the GOB to fight terrorism and ensure national security. Minister Al Arrayed told Charge, in confidence, that H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa is personally lobbying members of Parliament to ensure passage of Bahrain's new counter-terrorism law. This law is designed to fill any gaps that exist in the criminal code to combat terrorism. Al Arrayed also intimated that the King in his capacity as Head of the Supreme Judicial Council, legally ordered the Attorney General to resolve his communication issues with the police and prepare a solid case against the six Bahraini terror suspects (see reftel) within the context of Bahraini law. Al Arrayed said the King wants to send a strong message to those elements that challenge security, "Don't play games with the security of Bahrain." END SUMMARY.

BAHRAIN'S CT LAW

12. (C) The Justice Minister told Charge that in November 2003 the King personally tasked him to draft a counter-terrorism law. He explained that this law is designed to fill any gaps that exist in the criminal code to fight terrorism. The Justice Minister added that the law passed Cabinet review and now requires Parliamentary approval. Al Arrayed expects there to be some debate in Parliament, because there are some who view the counter-terrorism law as a direct response to US concerns. However, Al Arrayed stressed to Charge that the King wants this law to move forward and he has personally started lobbying members of Parliament to ensure the law's passage. Parliament will convene for its third session in October.

DUE PROCESS - BAHRAINIS SIX

13. (C) Responding to Charge's request, the Justice Minister clarified judicial procedure as previously reported (see reftel) with regards to the case against the six Bahraini terror suspects. He expects the case to go to trial, but did not specify when. The Justice Minister acknowledged that there are communication problems between the Ministry of Interior and the Public Prosecutor's Office that have created unwarranted obstacles. He added that the separation of the Public Prosecutor's Office from the Ministry of Interior (less than one year ago) and the youth and inexperience of some prosecutors also contributed to communication difficulties.

14. (C) Al Arrayed said nonetheless, the King personally ordered the Attorney General to fully cooperate and communicate with the Ministry of Interior to prepare the case for the prosecution within the context of Bahraini law. Minister Al Arrayed explained that with regard to legal issues, the Prosecutor's Office comes under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Judicial Council. The King is the Head of the Supreme Judicial Council and as such has the legal right to order the Attorney General to responsibly carry out his duties.
ZIADEH